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Annual Legislative Submission

presented to the

PREMIER and CABINET MEMBERS

Government of Alberta

Edmonton, Alberta

by the

ALBERTA FEDERATION of LABOUR

C. L. C.

December 9, 1971

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Mr. Premier and Honourable Members:

The Alberta Federation of Labour is pleased to have the opportunity to appear before you today and present our views on many of the subjects that are of concern, not only to organized labour, but to all of us as citizens of Alberta.

In view of the fact that you are a new government, we feel it is of utmost importance that you are aware of the matters that we consider require your immediate attention.

We have seen rapid changes in our province in a few short years, such as increased economic activity, higher educational standards, increased living standards for most of our citizens, a continuing shift from a rural agrarian society to an urban industrial society with a consequent shifting of values. While many of our citizens have benefited from these changes, far too many inequities still exist. In spite of our so-called affluent society, people are still living in poverty; unemployment is increasing; our environment is threatened with destruction; equality of opportunity does not exist and the poor and the aged, along with our native people, are left outside the mainstream of our society.

These are challenges that face your Government. Bold and imaginative programs must be developed in order that all our citizens can share in the fruits of production and live in comfort and human dignity.

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Structure of the Brief

I. Labour Legislation
II. Exclusions from Union Organization and Collective Bargaining
III. Certification Proceedings
IV. Company Unions
V. Cease and Desist Orders
VI. Picketing
VII. Arbitration and Conciliation Board Chairmen
VIII. Emergency Measures and Compsulsory Arbitration Tribunal Procedure
IX. Workmen's Compensation
X. Coal Mine Safety
XI. Age of Majority
XII. Environment Conservation and Pollution Control
XIII. Shorter Workweek
XIV. Student Ecology Corp
XV. Poverty and Minimum Wages
XVI. Technological Change
XVII. Miners' Training Program
XVIII. Bonding of Contractors
XIX. Statutory Holidays
XX. Private Employment Agencies
XXI. Full Employment
XXII. Taxation
XXIII. Mineral Rights
XXIV. Royalties
XXV. Boards and Commissions
XXVI. Pensions
XXVII. Pre-Retirement Planning
XXVIII. Public Health
XXIX. Nursing Homes
XXX. Women's Rights
XXXI. Housing
XXXII. Wage Assignments
XXXIII. Auto Insurance

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LABOUR LEGISLATION

The Alberta Labour Act should work to protect the interests of working people in the province. It should encourage and protect the right to organize, encourage and promote free collective bargaining. We submit, Mr. Premier, that the Alberta Labour Act is not meeting this purpose. It has become more restrictive and has been used as a tool of the employers to discourage and frustrate organization of free and democratic trade unions and to restrict and frustrate the free collective bargaining process. Free collective bargaining is tantamount to a free and democratic society. The role of government should be to establish a framework in which the free collective bargaining process can be carried out, not to interfere and restrict the rights of working people.

We would suggest that the legislation contain a preamble with a positive commitment to the collective bargaining system. This should encourage and ensure recognition of the social purpose of collective bargaining as an instrument for the advancement of fundamental freedoms in our industrial society. This is in line with recommendations put forward by the Report of the Task Force on Labour Relations to the Federal Government. The Province of Ontario has adopted a positive preamble to the labour legislation in that province and we would suggest that your Government do likewise.

It is not our purpose today to review the total Labour Act. However, we would wish to point out some of the main problem areas that exist and attempt to establish some general principles that should be applied to labour legislation. We would wish, gentlemen, to make a further, more detailed submission to the Minister of Labour at a later date at which time we could deal with the specific items in the

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Alberta Labour Act that your Government should be giving immediate attention to.

EXCLUSIONS FROM UNION ORGANIZATION AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Over the years, we have seen more and more classes of employees excluded from the right to join a union of their choice and also to have the right of collective bargaining. Restrictions in these areas should be lifted and the right of employees to join a union of their choice and the right of all workers to carry on collective bargaining with the employer should be extended, and this should include provincial civil servants and crown agency employees under the terms of the Labour Act.

CERTIFICATION PROCEEDINGS

The present lengthy proceedings for certification restricts union organization and has, in fact, encouraged company unions. It has allowed employers to coerce and intimidate employees.

In many cases, unions have lost out in their application for certification because of long and drawn-out hearings and delays before the Board of Industrial Relations, which have been initiated by the employer. Instead of the twenty-one days to process an application for certification, we find this time is being stretched to three months or more. This has allowed some employers to intimidate and coerce the employees and, as a result, when a vote is finally taken by the Board of Industrial Relations, the union is defeated.

We would suggest that where a union establishes that a majority of the employees have signed cards and paid the initiation fee, certification should be automatic. Votes should be conducted

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We would suggest that where a union establishes that a majority of the employees have signed cards and paid the initiation fee, certification should be automatic. Votes should be conducted

only when less than 50% of the employees make application for certification.

An applicant trade union should be granted certification anytime it has proven that the employer has interfered with or tried to influence the employees' selection of a bargaining agent.

The present voting procedures which require, in the case of a vote for the choice of the union, that 50% of the eligible voters must vote for the union rather than a simple majority of those voting is undemocratic, to say the least, and only supports and encourages anti-union forces. There is no good reason why an employee who does not excercise his right to vote should be counted as a vote against the union.

We have had cases in the province where the majority of those voting have selected a particular union as the bargaining agent and certification has been denied because there were less than 50% of the eligible voters voting in favour of the union. If governments were elected on the same basis, very few of the present MLA's would be allowed to represent the electorate.

COMPANY UNIONS

The Province of Alberta is plagued with more company unions than any other province in Canada. These employer-dominated organizations, which are commonly referred to as employee associations, are too readily granted certification by the Board of Industrial Relations. We suggest that your Government would be doing a service to the working people of Alberta if a full inquiry into the extent and control of company-dominated organizations in this province was embarked on immediately. Where it is found that any organization is

controlled or dominated by an employer, it should be outlawed and denied the right to be certified as a collective bargaining agent. In order to control the situation, adequate legislative changes must be made to the Alberta Labour Act and along with the legislative changes must come proper enforcement procedures.

CEASE AND DESIST ORDERS

The last amendments to the Alberta Labour Act gave the Board of Industrial Relations the right to issue Cease and Desist Orders in cases of unfair labour practices. However, it has been our experience that the Board has been far too hesitant, to say the least, to issue Cease and Desist Orders even in the face of blatant unfair labour practices and we would request that your Government move quickly to correct this situation.

This is a distinct contrast with the ease in which injunctions are obtained in the case of labour disputes. It is our view that injunctions, and in particular exparte injunctions, should not be allowed when a labour-management dispute exists. It has been our experience that they become a strike-breaking tool of mangement.

PICKETING

Peaceful picketing can only be considered as an extension of the freedom of speech. Unnecessary restrictions of the right of picketing only deny the worker the opportunity to inform the public that a dispute with the employer exists and the circumstances surrounding that dispute.

The last government reneged on its promise to legislate the picketing clause in effect in British Columbia, leaving us with a much

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The last government reneged on its promise to legislate the picketing clause in effect in British Columbia, leaving us with a much

watered-down provision, which is applicable only to the place of employment of striking employees. Rather than giving employees certain picketing rights under the legislation, we find that in the Province of Alberta we now have the most restrictive legislation in Canada in this area.

We also have, in the present legislation, clauses that deny the right of a union to apply for certification or to conclude a collective agreement if informational picketing has occurred. We would request that these types of restrictive clauses be removed from the Alberta Labour Act.

ARBITRATION AND CONCILIATION BOARD CHAIRMEN

It is the practice of the Department of Labour to appoint a chairman to these boards when the parties to the dispute cannot agree on the appointment of a chairman.

In practically every case in the past few years, these chairmen have been either management representatives or members of the legal profession who represent various management groups and companies throughout the province. We cannot tolerate these situations any longer. On numerous occasions we have made suggestions to the past Minister and to members of the Department for changes to the present procedure. We have suggested that a permanent panel of arbitrators be established by mutual consent of labour and management groups in the province where at all possible. Where mutual agreement on the members of the arbitration panel cannot be reached, then the Minister of Labour would fill out the panel members. However, once a person is named to a panel of permanent arbitrators, he should not at any time be allowed to represent either management or labour in any capacity.

Unless there is some semblance of neutrality to the people that are used as chairmen of boards, then the whole process becomes farcical, and certainly in the case of the labour movement we have lost all respect for the Department and the people that have been appointed to these positions.

Legislative changes are not required to rectify this matter. It is an administrative matter and should be attended to as quickly as possible.

EMERGENCY MEASURES AND COMPULSORY ARBITRATION TRIBUNAL PROCEDURE

These types of procedures spelled out in the present legislation are unnecessary and are not conducive to the free collective bargaining process. Employers in certain industries will not carry out meaningful negotiations or bargain in good faith as long as they feel that they are immune from any economic sanction on the part of the employees. When employees are threatened with the use of this legislation, meaningful negotiations cannot be carried out and the whole process becomes one of frustration. If a real emergency truly existed in the case of the labour dispute in the province, then the rightful place to deal with this would be in the legislature and the government has all the authority necessary to deal with that particular dispute. This would be a much more enlightened and meaningful approach than to have blanket legislation that could be applied to any group of employees at any time through an order in council. The past government always argued that while we have this type of legislation we have never had the necessity to use it. It is incomprehensible to us that if it has not been necessary to use this type of legislation in the past, why then is it necessary for any

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government to expand on restrictive legislation of this type.

We submit to you, Mr. Premier, Members of the Cabinet, that the labour unions in this province are responsible organizations and we have never created a situation that has been detrimental to the life and health of the citizens of this province, nor do we foresee any circumstance that would create this situation in the future.

Compulsory settlements and restrictive legislation has not brought about industrial peace in any other country in which it has been tried and we can assure you that it will not bring about good labour-management relationships in this province either.

We only have to look at the record in Australia where labour courts have been in existence. The number of work stoppages in that country far exceeds that of Canada and any other country where there is no compulsory arbitration. Therefore, making strikes illegal and forcing compulsory settlements has not brought about industrial peace, but has created a situation where there are numerous illegal work stoppages.

The best role that the government can play in the area of collective bargaining is to provide a knowledgeable, qualified and well-paid mediation service.

As we have already mentioned, Mr. Premier, it is not our intention at this time to go into all details of the Alberta Labour Act and we would wish to make a much more comprehensive and detailed submission to the Minister in the very near future.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION

The present Workmen's Compensation Act and all the rules and regulations governing health and safety of the workers of this province

[illegible] is opposed to restrictive legislation of this type.

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must be reviewed and upgraded to meet present-day conditions. Industrial accident victims, at the present time, are receiving totally inadequate pensions under the Workmen's Compensation Act. Workers who have been crippled by accident and disease at the workplace are left to suffer and live in poverty for the rest of their lives. This also applies to the victims' families.

The present benefits payable under the Workmen's Compensation Act are totally inadequate, in light of present-day living costs. Other provinces have upgraded benefits in the past year; therefore, we request your Government move quickly in this area.

While there are many regulations established to deal with industrial accidents of a physical nature, far too little has been done to deal with matters of industrial health. Workers are crippled and die of diseases every day that have been afflicted at the workplace because of environmental conditions. We would request that your Government move immediately to provide adequate research, adequate enforcement of safety and health regulations and adequate compensation for victims and their families.

It was the practice of the past government to establish a legislative committee of MLA's to hear submissions and make recommendations on changes in the Workmen's Compensation Act. We do not believe that this is a proper or intelligent manner in which to approach this whole subject because we have found through experience that the people who have been appointed to these committees in the past do not have the expertise or the knowledge to deal with the subject matter in front of them.

We would suggest, Mr. Premier, that an Independent Commission of knowledgeable people be appointed to study and make

recommendations on all areas of industrial health and safety and workmen's compensation. In the mean time, there is not any good reason why your Government could not upgrade the present benefit levels of pensions that are being paid under the Workmen's Compensation Act and bring them in line with present-day economic conditions and also ensure that the Workmen's Compensation Board hires a sufficient number of competent inspectors to ensure that the present regulations are adequately enforced.

COAL MINE SAFETY

Reports on the conditions in coal mines with respect to health and safety have been, to say the least, frightening. Knowledgeable trade unionists, who have expertise in the field of mine safety, label conditions in Alberta coal mines as appalling, and a descent down in the McIntyre Porcupine Mine at Grande Cache is like a journey fifty years into the past.

The Alberta Federation of Labour requests that your Government review the Coal Mine Regulations Act with the intent of upgrading standards considerably. We would welcome the opportunity to appear before the Minister and present a comprehensive brief outlining our concerns and recommendations.

AGE OF MAJORITY

During the last session of the Alberta Legislature, the Age of Majority Act was passed. Because of lowering of the age of majority, this legislation was amended. Changes were made to the Workmen's Compensation Act that have an adverse affect on widows with dependent children. Previously, widows received allowances

for dependent children under twenty-one years of age who were attending school. This now is lowered to eighteen years. The widows' and dependents' allowances under Workmen's Compensation are totally inadequate and by lowering the age of dependent children, this created further hardships on widows and their dependents.

The Alberta Federation of Labour made our concerns known to the previous government when the Age of Majority Act was introduced. However, our requests fell on deaf ears. The Workmen's Compensation Act is designed to protect the workman and his dependents and should not have been changed because of the Age of Majority Act. We would, therefore, request your Government correct this injustice.

ENVIRONMENT CONSERVATION AND POLLUTION CONTROL

Mr. Premier and Members of the Cabinet: The Alberta Federation of Labour has noted with interest that the Honourable Minister of Environment, Mr. Yurko, while he was an opposition member was indeed a very able critic of the government policy on pollution control.

Mr. Yurko's proposed Bill to control air, water, and soil pollution is certainly the direction governments should be headed. Many aspects of what your Government stated in opposition were indeed the sentiments of the Alberta Federation of Labour. Therefore, we are anticipating some significant changes in the Environment Department Act with emphasis on regulation and control. Mr. Yurko's suggestion for an Air, Water, and Pollution Control Commission is an excellent suggestion.

The Commission would be made up of twelve members representing government, municipal, fish and game, farm, labour, engineering and

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[illegible] government, municipal, fish and game, farm, labour, engineering and

manufacturing representatives. Associate members should include technical representatives and elected officials, including MLA's and one alderman from Edmonton and Calgary. The Commission would be empowered with supervision of the Act; develop programs for the prevention, control and abatement of pollution; co-ordinate pollution control programs; disseminate information; classify water bodies as use and establish minimum standards of quality for each as well as air standards and standards for emissions from motor vehicles.

The Alberta Federation of Labour most definitely agrees with the Honourable Minister of Environment's statement that pollutors must pay. It is our contention that if we are ever to control pollution, it must be done at its source.

The labour movement recommends the following be considered:

Regulations

With regard to regulations, we propose that the regulations control present and future plant emissions and productions to limit pollution to a tolerable level, and we propose that the regulations include the satisfactory treatment of employees and communities that may be affected when these changes are implemented. The regulations must be effective and enforceable legislation, which will prevent, under severe penalty, the continuance of destructive practices, which would endanger our environment.

Controls

Once the standards are established for an industry, regular inspection must be carried out by qualified inspectors. These inspectors must have the right of entry at any time to carry out said inspections. If the industry is found guilty of violating the

Clear Water Act, Clear Air Act, etc., then severe penalties must be imposed.

Research

Pollution cannot, however, be prevented by legislation alone. Such legislation must be augmented by research and experimentation in government and private agencies.

Labour's Role

The Alberta Federation of Labour also recognizes that we, too, have a role to play in protecting our environment. Throughout this year we have embarked in an on-going program to educate trade unionists and, hopefully, other groups in society and the general citizenry to develop a continuing recognition of the threat to our very livelihood. Included with our submission today is a pamphlet published by the Alberta Federation of Labour "What is Labour's Stake in Environmental Pollution".

Much has been said about stopping pollution at the plant gate. However, we cannot accept this concept. We believe very strongly that pollution should be stopped inside the factory fence at the source. If this were done, we would not have to worry about industrial pollutants in the community. Far too little attention has been paid to the matter of environmental health and the effect of unhealthy environmental conditions on the worker. We would request that your Government immediately move to increase research facilities in the areas of industrial health and to increase the staff and services of the Industrial Health Department. The present

staff of four people in the Industrial Health Department cannot possibly do the job that is required. It is the responsibility of government to set standards for the protection of our environment, as well as our safety and health; and the setting of such standards that seriously affect the workplace, the worker and his union.

Many government agencies, boards, etc., have no labour representation. Pollution control must start on the job at the plant site. Therefore, we are requesting that:

(1) the Alberta Government have labour representation on all decision-making bodies that affect the workplace;

(2) that legislation be enacted that will give the worker the right to refuse to perform work assignments that pollute the environment without fear of reprisal or discipline by management.

(3) that legislation be enacted that will give labour the right to bargain on matters relating to pollution or technological change at any time, and that a collective agreement that may be in effect will not be a bar to such bargaining in any way.

SHORTER WORKWEEK

If adequate pollution control measures are adopted and enforced, it may mean in a number of cases that employees' jobs will be eliminated. This, along with improved technology, will mean that fewer people will be employed and, thus, workweeks and workdays must

be reduced, which will consequently create more leisure time.

We would request that your Government immediately change the exisitng Board of Industrial Relations' Orders regarding hours of work that allow employees in the province to work forty-four hours a week. A standard workweek of forty hours has been in effect for a number of years with some industries now working considerably less. We would suggest that the hours of work orders be amended to provide for a forty-hour workweek and that no exemptions be granted from these orders. Further to this, the hours of work should be reduced as conditions warrant.

Even with the present 44-hour standard, the Board of Industrial Relations has granted that employees in certain industries may work hours in excess of this standard. i.e.:

(1) Highway and railway construction, brush clearing, oil well drilling - 10 hours per day, 191 hours per month;

(2) taxi cab industry, automotive repair and service station industries in national parks - 10 hours per day and 60 hours per week.

Under the existing legislation, the maximum vacation allowed is two weeks per year, with no consideration given to length of service, or otherwise. We would request that vacations with pay should be a minimum of two weeks per year with provisions for a longer vacation, depending on length of service.

If people are to have shorter workweeks, longer vacations and earlier retirement, then it will be necessary for your Government to launch a massive program to increase and upgrade the recreation areas in the province. The parks and recreation areas

that are available today are overcrowded and in many cases, the lakes around which they are situated, are polluted to such an extent that they are not fit for the enjoyment of the people of this province. A program of this nature would not only provide the needed park and recreation areas, it would also provide much needed employment at this time.

STUDENT ECOLOGY CORP

During the past summer, the past government established a Student Ecology Corp to provide work for students during the summer months. If this type of program is to be continued by your Government, then some very major changes must be applied to the program. It was our experience in the past summer, the so-called ecology corp students were being employed by municipalities and doing work that was normally done by members of the regular work force in previous summers. These students were being paid at less than the minimum wage, while members of the regular work forces were sitting idle.

If the Ecology Corp is to be maintained, we would propose that students come under the terms of the Labour Act and that their wages be in line with the wages of regular employees doing essentially the same work. In no case, should students be used to under cut the wage rates established by collective agreements.

POVERTY AND MINIMUM WAGES

The Alberta Federation of Labour, in our submission to the past government in January, 1969, dealt in some detail with the

matter of poverty in the Province of Alberta. What we said regarding poverty in 1969 is still valid in 1971. What we said in regards to poverty as related to the minimum wage bears repeating now. Poverty is not confined to those on welfare rolls or the unemployed, but extends to those who are working fulltime--those people who are compelled, through no choice of their own, to work for the minimum wage, in many cases, that is established by the government.

The present minimum wage of $1.55 per hour in so many cases becomes the maximum paid by a great number of employers. The minimum wage level as it presently exists does nothing more than create pockets of poverty and allows inefficient and unscrupulous employers to operate businesses at the expense of society.

Anyone working fulltime on a forty-four-hour week, which is allowed by present legislation, earns a maximum of $3,546.00 per year. On a forty-hour week, this amounts to only $3,224.00 per year. If this is all a worker is able to earn for a full year's work, it is no wonder that we have so many people living in poverty. We would suggest that your Government immediately increase the minimum wage to $2.00 per hour and provide for further upward revision to $2.50 per hour, which is the policy of the Alberta Federation of Labour.

A substantial increase in the minimum wage would not only assist greatly in eliminating the working poor in this province, it would also give added purchasing power to many thousands of people; this would in turn stimulate the economy and assist in combating the very serious unemployment problem that we are now confronted with.

TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

The Alberta Federation of Labour is pleased with the intent of the proposed legislation introduced by the Federal Government concerning problems faced by workers due to automation. We would suggest that your Government examine recommended changes to the Federal Labour Standards Code (Bill C-228) with the view of introducing similar legislation in Alberta.

A Royal Commission, appointed in 1965 (Freedman Enquiry) to enquire into the railway "run-throughs", in its recommendations raised serious doubts about the so-called Management Rights Theory. The report stated:

> "The old concept of labour as a commodity simply will not suffice; it is at once wrong and dangerous. Hence, there is a responsibility upon the entrepreneur who introduces technological change to see that it is not affected at the expense of his working force. That is the human aspect of technological challenge, and it must not be ignored."

Therefore, it is the responsibility of governments at both the provincial and federal levels to use their legislative authority to ensure that management will carry out its responsibilities. It is imperative that all technological change be the subject matter for meaningful negotiation. It is therefore, the government's responsibility to enact the necessary legislation that will:

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The Alberta Federation of Labour is pleased with the intent of the proposed legislation introduced by the Federal Government concerning problems faced by workers due to automation. We would suggest that your Government examine recommended changes to the Federal Labour Standards Code (Bill C-229) with the view of introducing similar legislation in Alberta.

A Royal Commission, appointed in 1965 (Freedman Inquiry) to enquire into the railway "run-through", in its recommendations raised serious doubts about the so-called Management Rights Theory. The report stated:

> "The old concept of labour as a commodity simply will not suffice; it is at once wrong and dangerous. Hence, there is a responsibility upon the entrepreneur who introduces technological change to see that it is not affected at the expense of his working force. That is the human aspect of technological challenge, and it must not be ignored."

Therefore, it is the responsibility of governments at both the provincial and federal levels to use their legislative authority to ensure that management will carry out its responsibilities. It is imperative that all technological change be the subject matter for meaningful negotiation. It is therefore, the government's responsibility to enact the necessary legislation that will:

(1) ensure the introduction of technological change

(2) guarantee the right to strike, even during the contract term, in the event such negotiations fail to produce a satisfactory settlement.

A committee should deal with the following points:

(1) Advance notice of change - notice to the government and to any trade union representing the workers. Government and labour should be informed of the number of workers to be displaced due to technological change.

(2) Legislation should be enacted to make it compulsory that joint committees of labour, management and government be established to ensure that a displaced worker is guaranteed employment and/or given adequate re-training.

(3) Severence pay - financial compensation for workers affected by technological change.

(4) Training and Re-training - methods have to be developed to ensure that workers affected by change will not be prevented from making the necessary adjustments because of lack of appropriate educational and training opportunities.

MINERS' TRAINING PROGRAM

Under the new training program for coal miners, we understand the training facilities are being contracted from McIntyre Porcupine Mines by the Department of Education. The Alberta

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(3) Severence pay - financial compensation for [illegible]

(4) [illegible] and Re-training - methods have to be developed to ensure that workers affected by change will not be prevented from making the [illegible] adjustments because of lack of appro- [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] new training program for coal miners, we under- [illegible] facilities are being contracted from McIntyre Porcupine Mines by the Department of Education. The Alberta

Federation of Labour certainly recognizes the necessity for this type of vocational training considering the shortages of coal miners in Alberta.

These are some suggestions we would like to make regarding this program. At the present time, weekly allowances paid out are somewhat below those paid by Canada Manpower.

Miners' Program	Canada Manpower
$40.00 per week - single	$47.00 per week - single
$72.00 per week - married	$61.00 per week - 1 dependent
	$71.00 per week - 2 dependents
	$81.00 per week - 3 dependents
	$87.00 per week - 4 or more dependents

(Under Canada Manpower, special allowances of $25.00 a week are paid when an individual has to maintain two residences.)

Increased emphasis must be placed on the training program at Grande Cache with no effort spared to recruit unemployed to take advantage of this opportunity. Due to the high level of unemployment, rather than recruiting experienced coal miners from all over the world, as much as is humanly possible should be done to employ our own unemployed.

BONDING OF CONTRACTORS

From time to time, employees in the building and construction industry have been deprived of, or have had difficulty in collecting wages, because employers in some instances have not been

able to meet their payroll. We would request that your Government enact legislation that would require all contractors in the building and construction industry to post a bond with the Provincial Department of Labour that would cover the approximate estimated total amount of the payroll for a three-month period.

The building and construction industry is composed of hundreds of contractors and sub-contractors. These companies specialize in either general contracting, bridge building, road construction, industrial plant construction, commercial building contracting and home building, among others. The majority of these businesses are small and employ few employees compared to the large contractors who employ, in many cases, many hundreds of workers. When there is a boom in the construction industry, many small independent sub-contractors are attracted to the industry. They are generally engaged in painting, plastering, carpentry, sheet metal work, excavating, roofing, etc. These contractors generally employ a minimum number of workers for a short period of time until the contract is completed; they are then laid off until another contract comes along. Many of these small sub-contractors have no general business experience, in fact some of them, prior to obtaining a contract, were employees themselves employed by other established contractors.

In many cases, the capitalization of these small businesses is minimal. These small enterprises become a very risky operation if the contractor is relying on one contract with a small profit margin. Unexpected difficulties may occur, such as a delay in obtaining materials, inclement weather, faulty workmanship that requires work to be done over, or other unforeseen delays. The purchase of material

is invariably a credit transaction paid for after the contract is completed.

Competition is the fiercest in the house-building industry. The course of events is usually as follows:

A large firm receives a contract for the building and completion of a number of homes. Most of the work is then sub-contracted to a number of smaller contractors generally on the basis of the lowest bid. The sub-contractor must rely on the main contractor being paid by the owner of the project before he himself gets paid, and in turn can pay his employees. Because the employees must be paid while the work is progressing, the sub-contractor may have to borrow money in order to carry on with the operation. All business enterprises are contingent on risk, more so in the building industry due to the method of awarding contracts to the lowest bidder.

With no investigation into the background of a particular bidder, especially in relation to capitalization, previous work, business methods and operation, it is obvious bankruptcies are bound to occur. When bankruptcies do occur, the employees either do not get paid or they must apply for their wages under the Builder's Lien Act. Employees are considered preferred creditors and come second in a claim against bankruptcy. Under the Builder's Lien Act, an employee will get paid but only to the extent of six weeks' wages, providing the lien has been registered within thirty-five days after the completion of the work. These methods of collection or non-collection of wages creates an extreme hardship on the employees involved. They are denied their rightful wages because of the unsound operation of the employer. An employee should not have to bear the extra burden of having to

collect his wages through bankruptcy or builder's lien procedures.

The enactment of legislation that would require all contractors to be bonded would guarantee that every employee would be paid for his labours regardless of the business administration of the employer. Employees should not suffer economic loss because of financially unsound business methods.

STATUTORY HOLIDAYS

Several large department stores have been remaining open on statutory holidays. Our Federation takes strong exception to this practice. We see this situation as creating two problems:

(1) Many employees are forced to work on statutory holidays who would normally not have had to do so. Initially, statutory holidays were established to give people who are not performing essential services a day off to spend with their families and friends.

(2) Secondly, many smaller businesses will be forced to stay open and compete with the corporate giants, such as The Bay and Eatons. This creates economic and social hardships for small business people who are struggling to make a decent living.

Overtime rates for work on statutory holidays was initiated as a deterrent. In the case of large department stores, the increased labour cost on a statutory holiday obviously does not act as a deterrent, but is merely passed on to the consumer through higher prices.

At the present time, store hours are regulated by local by-laws. In view of the fact that labour legislation is under the jurisdiction of the Provincial Government and statutory holidays are established under the Alberta Labour Act; we therefore, request that your Government enforce the intent of statutory holiday legislation and require that all businesses other than essential services be closed on statutory holidays.

PRIVATE EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES

Mr. Premier and Members of the Cabinet: There is a situation in this province that must be corrected. It is a sad state of affairs when parasites are allowed to live off the misfortune of people. Private employment agencies only serve to deter from the efficient operation of Canada Manpower and derive profit from the exploitation of human beings.

Your Government must move very quickly to outlaw private employment agencies. They are a blight on society and a disgrace to Alberta--the land for living.

FULL EMPLOYMENT

The Alberta Federation of Labour recognizes that the current unemployment problem in Canada is a result of past Federal Government policies. However, we must urge your Government to take immediate action to supplement the Federal Government's works program, even though we regard this program a little too late to be of much effect to the economy this winter.

In a depressed economy, such as the one we are presently

experiencing, increased expenditures in the public sector should have number one priority. While we are somewhat encouraged by the fact that your Government is accelerating $71 million worth of construction projects, we are at the same time concerned that this does not entail increased expenditures on the part of your Government, in that the majority of these projects have already been budgeted for in this fiscal year.

The major problem in combating unemployment on a short-run basis is the time lag between the initiation of the project and the time which people are actually employed.

We recognize that crash programs to create employment are necessary at this time, however, most of these projects are of a short-term nature. We cannot over emphasize the fact that long-range planning for sustained economic growth and a policy of full employment must be adopted by all levels of government.

Alberta's relatively good economic position in the past has come about more from good fortune than good management. Alberta's economy has thrived because of sales of our natural resources and a consequent construction boom. A continuous sell-out of our natural resources cannot continue without dire consequences. Our oil and gas are non-renewable resources and the day will come when Alberta is left with nothing more than holes in the ground. The recent findings of the Natural Energy Board clearly indicate that we do not have an unlimited supply of natural gas for export.

We would suggest that increased emphasis be placed on the development of secondary industry.

Considering the fact that capital expansion in our province is

down and private industry is unable or unwilling to pick up the slack, the Alberta Federation of Labour urges your Government to take the initiative in this area by establishing a crown corporation to develop secondary industry.

Public Spending

The housing industry is capable of higher output on a sustained degree. Your Government must step up its role considerably in the development of low income housing. More money should be allocated to Municipal Governments. Along with increased housing, the need for expansion in education facilities is a necessity.

Also, your Government, in co-operation with the Municipal Governments, should develop a comprehensive program to establish recreation facilities and day care centres throughout the province.

Financial and other forms of assistance to encourage the development of community clinics should be instituted by your Goverment. We believe this to be an excellent approach to supplying health services. Increased hospital facilities are needed throughout the province. Of course, this would necessitate your Government removing the financial barrier that hospital boards are faced with.

We submit that your Government should be drafting emergency legislation to stimulate the economy. By implementing the programs we have outlined, necessary stimulus will be introduced into the economy to create jobs for the unemployed and also enhance the standard of living for Albertans.

TAXATION

Mr. Premier, the Federation is most pleased that your Government has announced that the cost of education will be removed from residential property. We consider this a most progressive step and we fully support you in this area. Of course, other sources of tax revenue will have to be found if the social services are removed from the property tax.

We would suggest that your Government can readily increase revenue from the resource industries of this province. For far too long, the natural resources of this province have been exploited for the benefit of the extractive industries. The oil and gas royalties received by the Province of Alberta are the lowest rate received by any government in the world. The ten-cents-a-ton royalty received for our coal does not even pay for the railway that the citizens of Alberta built for McIntyre Porcupine Mines.

We would suggest that your Government immediately increase the royalties on our natural resources to a level that the market will bear and to assure that the citizens of the Province of Alberta get a just return for the natural resources that are being taken from our province.

There has been much concern expressed recently about the rising education costs within the province and also within the nation. We are not about to jump on the band wagon of those who would cut education costs just for the sake of cutting costs. The value of education in our society cannot be measured with a dollar bill. What we must be concerned about is the value that we are getting from our education system for the amount of money expended.

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For too many years we have been telling the young people that the gateway to success was a higher standard of education; however, we find today that people are graduating from our universities and find that all they are qualified to do in our society is join the ranks of the unemployed. While we are not adverse to post-secondary education, it appears that far too much emphasis is placed on higher education while thousands of people in the lower social economic group are still not afforded the opportunities, or provided with, the standard of education that has been provided for the more affluent members of our society.

MINERAL RIGHTS

Sales and rentals of mineral rights are an important source of revenue. We believe that there are several changes which should be made:

(1) Work requirements on reservations should be increased. This would force major oil companies to increase their exploratory effort or force them to drop the land and give the smaller companies a chance to pick them up. It is likely the exploration tempo would increase, and revenue would also increase from sales far in excess of what has been received from rentals.

(2) Lease selection out of a reservation should be changed. At the present time, 50% of a reservation can be converted to a lease. The maximum single lease can be a two-by-four, or three-by-

[illegible]

[illegible]

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[illegible] changed. At the present time, 50% of a reservation can be converted to a lease. The maximum single lease can be a two-by-four, or three-by-

three-mile square block. Even though no two lease blocks may adjoin, except at corners or else be separated by a one-mile strip between these lease blocks, this usually results in the company making the discovery acquiring leases covering all or most of the structure. It would be sufficient to permit the operator to retain one section of land around the discovery well, but the remainder should be checkerboarded in quarter-section blocks. This would result in the Crown having more attractive acreage for sale.

(3) All well information should be released to the industry as soon as it is available, so that every bidder has access to the same information when bidding on a lease or reservation. This should result in higher prices being paid to the Crown.

(4) Terms of leases should be shortened to five years. They were reduced from twenty-one to ten years in 1962, but a further shortening is needed. Five years is long enough for a company to decide whether or not it wants to drill. Shortening lease terms would result in greater drilling activity. Some leases would be returned sooner, but these could be re-sold by the Crown.

(5) Grouping of leases on reservations for drilling

three-mile square block. Even though no two lease blocks may adjoin, except at corners or else be [illegible] the discovery acquiring leases covering all or most [illegible] the operator to retain one section of land around the discovery well, but the remaining should be [illegible] result in the Crown having more extensive acreage for sale.

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(5) Grouping of leases or reservations for drilling

obligations, introduced in 1962, should be rescinded because it permits a company to do less drilling for the amount of land it can tie up.

(6) The special treatment for Block "A" (Townships one to sixty-five between Meridians four and five) introduced in 1962, should be discontinued. The argument was that this part of the province has been explored to the point where an extensive oil field is unlikely to be found, and that an oil company should be allowed to convert all of a reservation to lease, instead of only 50% of it, as in the rest of the province. This is not a sound argument, because Block "A" has not been explored to the same extent as certain areas of the United States, where major finds are still being made.

ROYALTIES

The royalty schedules need an upward revision. Royalty rates were last revised in April, 1962.

The average royalty of all wells in Alberta is probably 12%. It may be possible to increase this to 25%. In Texas, the going royalty rate for freehold parcels is 25% to 30%. Alberta should lead the way for royalty increases because it produces two thirds of Canada's oil and has the most promising areas for future discoveries. The other provinces would probably fall in line, but even if they did not, a high level of activity would continue because of the favourable geological prospects in our province.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

We would request, Mr. Premier, that your Government review the structure and appointment to the various boards and commissions in the province. For far too long, the labour movement has been ignored on boards to which we rightfully should have representation.

i.e.: (1) The Public Service Pension Board does not have representation from labour. It is incomprehensible to us that a board that deals with the employees' pension plans and employees' investments in their own retirement should not have representation from the employees that are affected.

(2) The Environmental Conservation Authority was established last year. In matters of environment and environmental control, there is no one more greatly affected than the worker, especially in matters of environmental health.

These are only two examples.

We would only ask that you review all of the existing boards and commissions and that due consideration be given to the labour movement in any future appointments. We do not request this, Mr. Premier, from a selfish standpoint. We believe that we should be recognized as an equal partner in the economic and social development of this province, and we are prepared to accept our responsibility and to play our rightful role in the development of Alberta.

PENSIONS

The Pension Benefits Act has been in existence in this province since 1966. We feel it is time this legislation was reviewed with a view to upgrading the regulations and adding new provisions to meet the needs of the times.

Pension contributions of the employer are a form of deferred wages. Payments and benefits in pension plans, as well as other fringe benefits, are becoming a larger part of the contract settlement package. The union bargaining on behalf of the employees must have access to all financial and other pertinent information. To be knowledgeable in what it is bargaining for, the union must know what the plan costs the employer from year to year; how the fund is invested--is there a proper return on the investment; what exactly the benefits are for each employee; what the possibilities are of improving the plan, etc.

We ask that your Government consider the following changes to the Pension Benefits Act:

(1) Employees who are the beneficiaries in the pension should have the right of representation. The superintendent of pensions should have an advisory board and such an advisory board should have a member representing employees covered by pension plans.

(2) Private pension plan committees should have employee representation.

(3) The Act should be amended to make it mandatory

[illegible]

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[illegible]

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(2) Private pension plan committees should have employee [illegible]

(3) The Act should be amended to make it mandatory

for all pension plans to provide a cost-of-living escalation clause.

(4) Legislation should be enacted to have all private pension plans negotiable.

(5) Investment of funds should be directed to undertakings with a social purpose such as housing.

PRE-RETIREMENT PLANNING

Much emphasis has been placed on improving educational standards for the young; upgrading, re-training and vocational training for adults. Improved educational opportunities are certainly beneficial to society. Progress cannot be achieved without the continuing education concept. However, this brings up the matter of one area of education which has been sadly neglected--planning for retirement. Is it not strange that one's whole life is a continuous learning experience, and yet up till now the educational system has not included retirement education.

Through the Alberta Council on Aging a course outline has been developed for pre-retirement planning, and to date, two workshops have been held. In the first instance, when the Alberta Federation of Labour sponsored the pilot project on retirement education, assistance was requested from the University of Alberta, Department of Extension. Unfortunately, the heavy expense incurred made it impossible to use the Department's expertise in the future, unless necessary monies can be made available for educational institutions in Alberta to provide this very necessary service to the community.

Therefore, the Alberta Federation of Labour urges the Government of Alberta, through the Department of Education, to explore the possibility of increasing research in work and leisure and develop a comprehensive pre-retirement course for the people of Alberta. We would suggest a good area to begin would be with the employees of the Provincial Government.

PUBLIC HEALTH

In the area of public health, the Alberta Federation of Labour cannot consider the real goals of medicare have been accomplished until every Albertan has all the health services he or she requires, in whatever form he requires them, whenever he requires them, without any economic interests to separate him from these services.

To reach this end, the Alberta Federation of Labour recommends your Government implement the following changes:

(1) Establish a goal of eliminating premium payments for medicare. (A good place to start would be with people sixty-five or over, as your counterparts in Ontario did.)

(2) Extend coverage to include: dental care, prescriptions, nursing care, prostheses, spectacles, false teeth, hearing aids, etc.

(3) Preventative health care should be emphasized with your Government encouraging community clinics, such as located in some centres of Ontario and

Saskatchewan.

(4) Nuisance deterrent fees should be abolished.

(5) Ambulance service should be controlled by the hospitals, and all ambulance service should be supplied free of charge.

NURSING HOMES

The labour movement is concerned about the possibility of social services being sub-contracted to private agencies. We would urge your Government to move with all possible haste to assume the responsibility of all nursing homes in the province; private enterprise has no right to exploit the aged.

Also, we would like to support recommendations presented to the Alberta Council on Aging by Professor G. De Coq on nursing home care.

Recommendations:

(1) That the aging person needs a continuum of care, and that must not be divided up amongst a number of auspices (public or private) but must begin to receive attention with respect to both policy and program from a unified body under government leadership. The inputs for making such policy and program decisions, however, may well come from a variety of sources, but at all times include the aging person.

(2) That the Provincial Government alienate the inadequacy of both the services, and the information about these services be available to aging persons.

(3) That Albertans should seriously question the private auspices of nursing homes as commercial enterprises while receiving public subsidies on the grounds that, in spite of government regulations and standards, it makes them suspect to shortcutting necessary services to the older person in order to make it a financially viable undertaking.

(4) Continued research should be carried out in our universities in all areas of care for the aging, and in nursing home care specifically.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

The Alberta Federation of Labour endorses the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women. We would urge your Government move with all possible haste to implement these recommendations, which come under provincial jurisdiction.

While there is legislation, which requires equal pay for equal work, there is, however, subtle discrimination against women in the areas of job opportunities and promotions. Your Government could lead the way and set an example for other employers by assuring that such discrimination is alleviated within the public service.

(2) That the Provincial Government alienate the [illegible] of both the services, and the information about these services be available to [illegible].

(3) That Albertans should seriously question the private auspices of nursing homes as commercial [illegible] while receiving public [illegible] on the grounds that, in spite of government regulations and standards, it makes them suspect to shortcutting necessary services to the older person in order to make it a financially viable [illegible].

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HOUSING

Since this is our first time appearing before your Government, Mr. Premier, we would like yourself and the Cabinet to be aware of the labour movements' position on housing.

We insist that all Albertans should have the right to decent housing at a cost they can afford. Housing can no longer be left in the hands of private developers; it must be a social program involving close co-operation from all levels of government.

Those families now living in public or low-cost housing should be encouraged to invest in homes of their own as their situation and earnings improve. Subsidized interest geared to income should be made available to those families earning between $6,000 and $10,000 per year.

Land assembly programs by both Municipal and Provincial Governments must be increased, thus reducing the high cost of property.

Ensure that the Alberta Housing Corporation takes the necessary steps to produce a minimum of five thousand public housing starts a year.

Establish rent control and citizen appeal boards where renters may air their grievances. These boards should have the authority to enforce recommendations.

Involve the public in planning bodies, thus enabling people to make decisions, goals and policies of housing needs.

Finally, a solution to Alberta's housing problems lies with a public policy, which would deal with housing in terms of human need rather than providing sporadic support to a building industry motivated by private profit and unconscionable returns to land speculators.

[illegible]

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Finally, a solution to Alberta's housing problems lies with a public policy, which would deal with housing in terms of human need [illegible]

WAGE ASSIGNMENTS

There has been numerous instances of abuse in the application of wage assignments and garnishments. In many cases, people find themselves in debt up to their ears due, in the main, to easy credit and the lack of consumer education. In these cases, families suffer undue hardships because the wage earner is either discharged for receiving a garnishment, or finds the majority of his wages assigned to loan companies or credit unions.

The Alberta Federation of Labour endorses, in total, the recommendations of a study recently completed by the Institute of Law Research and Reform, University of Alberta. We request your Government have the Institute of Law Research and Reform conduct a study on garnishment of wages and introduce reform legislation in both the areas of wage assignments and garnishments.

AUTO INSURANCE

Mr. Premier and Members of the Cabinet: We find ourselves returning each year and asking the previous "Social Credit" and, today, your Government, for a publicly-operated automobile insurance program. We know full well that car insurance will inevitably become publicly-operated, just as other social legislation took years before all the provinces of Canada finally adopted same.

Why not follow the example of Saskatchewan and Manitoba and bring down legislation at the next sitting of the Legislature, which will benefit all Albertans?

In 1971, for example, Alberta premiums in a selected area (single under twenty-four) are 45% higher than Manitoba and 40%

[illegible]

There has been numerous instances of abuse in the [illegible] of wage assignments and garnishments. In many cases, people find themselves in debt up to their ears due, in the main, to easy credit and the lack of consumer education. In these cases, [illegible] or [illegible] or [illegible] or

higher than Saskatchewan. These two provinces have led the way and have proven that public-no-fault automobile insurance saves consumers money, pays out higher claims, prevents costly legal battles, and returns profits back to the government.

In the long run, common sense will prevail and as sure as God made the little green apples, this province will have government auto insurance. So the Alberta Federation of Labour's position is: Why not do it now?

All of which has been respectfully submitted by:

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL,

ALBERTA FEDERATION OF LABOUR, C.L.C.

R. Jamha	President
D. Graham	1st Vice President
R. Basken	2nd Vice President
A. Roberts	3rd Vice President
H. MacDonald	4th Vice President
P. Kolba	Secretary-Treasurer
B. Adams	Executive Council Member
S. Fritter	Executive Council Member
F. Kuzemski	Executive Council Member
A. Szchechina	Executive Council Member
B. Schimmel	Edmonton Labour Council
B. Paterson	Calgary Labour Council
T. Donaldson	Lethbridge Labour Council
L. Hewson	Red Deer Labour Council
J. Driscoll	Medicine Hat Labour Council
E. Mitchell	Executive Secretary
E. Steele	Assistant Executive Secretary

[illegible] [illegible]. These two provinces have led the way and [illegible] [illegible] successfully [illegible] [illegible] [illegible], [illegible] [illegible] [illegible], [illegible] [illegible], and [illegible] [illegible] back to the government.

In the long run, common sense will prevail and as sure as [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

JAN 29 1976

Mr. Premier and Members of the Cabinet:

Further to the remarks contained in the brief of the Alberta Federation of Labour under the heading "Pensions" and on behalf of all the employees covered by or subscribing to the Local Authorities Pension Plan, we wish to add the following summation.

Under this plan, as you are aware, it is possible for a person to retire on an actuarily reduced pension at age 55 providing the person has at least 25 years contributions. There is a further provision that a person can retire on a full formula pension at age 55 or later providing he or she has at least 35 years contributions. In other words, the total number of years of age plus the number of years of contributions must equal 90. There is also a provision in the plan for persons to retire at age 60 on full formula pension with at least 25 years contributions.

Due to the fact that a tremendous number of young people have entered the labour market who are unable to find employment and in view of the fact that in a great many cases they are much more educated than some of our past middle aged employees, it would appear to us that the formula should be reduced to a total of 85, the person would then be able to retire on a full pension.

It is our understanding that the Federal Minister of Pensions is proposing that all federal government employees who at age 55 have 30 years contributions may retire with no actuarial reduction in their pensions.

Another point we would like to raise at this time is that the Canadian Union of Public Employees represents approximately 16,000 municipal employees in this province. As the government employees have representation on the Board, we would now make the appeal that provision be made in the Act for a representative from the municipal employees in this province to sit on the Board.

Respectfully submitted by:

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL,

ALBERTA FEDERATION OF LABOUR, C.L.C.

Mr. Premier and Members of the Cabinet:

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Under this plan, as you are aware, it is possible for a person to retire on an actuarily reduced pension at age 55 providing the person has at least 25 years contributions. There is a further provision that a person can retire on a full formula pension at age 55 or later provided he or she has at least 35 years contributions. In other words, the total number of years of age plus the number of years of contributions must equal 90. There is also a provision in the plan for persons to retire at age 60 on full formula pension with at least 25 years contributions.

Due to the fact that a tremendous number of young people have entered the labour market who are unable to find employment and in view of the fact that in a great many cases they are much more educated than some of our post-middle aged employees, it would appear to us that the formula should be reduced to a total of 85, the person would then be able to retire on a full pension.

It is our understanding that the Federal Minister of Pensions is proposing that all Federal government employees who at age 55 have 30 years contributions may retire with no actuarial reduction in their pensions.

Another point we would like to raise at this time is that the Canadian Union of Public Employees represents approximately 10,000 municipal employees in this province. As the government employees have representation on the Board, we would say that equal time provision be made in the Act for a representative from the municipal employees in this province to sit on the Board.

Respectfully submitted by:

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL,

ALBERTA FEDERATION OF LABOUR, C.L.C.